NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION

Information Letter

FOR N. C. A. MEMBERS

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Conference on Simplified Containers for Preserves, Etc.

A conference on the simplification of varieties and sizes of containers used in packing preserves, jellies and apple butter will be held in the Hotel Cleveland, Cleveland, Ohio, on Tuesday, September 18, in conjunction with the mid-year convention of the National Preservers Association.

The conference was arranged by the Division of Simplified Practice of the U. S. Department of Commerce at the request of the National Preservers Association, and will consider a recommended range of sizes and varieties for future practice, the establishment of an effective date for the recommendation, and the appointment of a Standing Committee to receive suggestions for the improvement of the recommendations that may be adopted. The recommendations to be considered provide for eight sizes of containers for preserves, seven sizes for jellies and four sizes for apple butter.

Invitations to the conference have been extended to manufacturers, distributors, and representative users of containers.

Canned Fruits Stock Survey

The following statement regarding the survey of stocks of canned fruits has been issued by R. S. Hollingshead of the Foodstuffs Division of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce:

The Department of Commerce recently attempted the collection of stock figures of canned fruits in the hands of wholesalers, chain stores, and the canners of fruits east of the Pacific Coast States, at the request of the California State Division of Markets. The work was done without any preliminary agitation and the results do not satisfactorily cover the whole indus-

try. About 3,800 questionnaires were distributed and replies were received from about 1,200. It appears that stocks on hand were about the same on May 1, 1927 and 1928, and that the large majority of holders expected to move these stocks before the new crop came in. The attitude toward consumption during the present crop year and the future trend was decidedly hopeful. There is a large demand for the collection of such stock figures at regular intervals.

About 15 per cent of the canners, exclusive of those on the West Coast, 18 per cent of the chains, and 30 per cent of the wholesalers furnished useable replies, no replies at all being received from 64 per cent of the canners, 80 per cent of the chains and 42 per cent of the wholesalers to which questionnaires were sent. The answers to some of the questions have produced some interesting results, although there are several possibilities in interpreting the figures.

A total of 1,215 replies were received from 3,831 questionnaires distributed, and of these 1,023 furnished more or less of the information desired. In view of the conditions, the number of replies was considered quite large. The actual stock figures received were of but comparatively small value on account of the impossibility of extending the figures satisfactorily in order to estimate the stocks of those not reporting. The results obtained were as follows, all sizes:

	Cases
Peaches	1,156,000
Pears	228,000
Pineapples	638,000
Apricots	210,000
R. A. Cherries	105,000
S. R. P. Cherries	42,000

A comparison of stocks as of May 1, 1927, and May 1, 1928, was requested. An average of slightly over 40 per cent reported for each fruit that stocks were larger in 1927 and the same proportion stated that stocks were lower. No actual stock figures were available, but there is no reason to believe that these figures mean anything else than that in general the total stocks have been about the same on both dates. There are some indications that chain store stocks were larger this year, and those of wholesalers smaller, judging solely by proportion of reports, and not by actual stocks.

Practically all (90 per cent) expected to move their stocks before the delivery of this year's pack.

There is a distinctly optimistic feeling among the firms reporting with regard to the trend of consumption for the current crop. The questionnaire called for an expression of opinion,

i. e., increase, decrease, or no change, in the consumption of each fruit. These opinions are summarized as follows:

Product	Percentage of reports showing— Increase	Decrease	No Change
Peaches	55	17	28
Pears	41	48	11
Pineapples	67	6	27
Apricots	34	11	55
Cherries, R. A. and S. R. P.	38	17	45

Again judging by the proportion of those reporting favorably, the chains and canners are apparently expecting better conditions than do the wholesalers.

In answer to a similar question regarding the trend for all canned fruits for the coming five years, the consensus of opinion, as expressed by about 89 per cent of those replying, is for an increased consumption, 9 per cent expecting a decrease and 2 per cent no change.

It is believed that this opinion is based upon the effects of copious advertising, together with the present tendency to modify the general dietary by the consumption of larger proportions of vegetable and fruit products, and the continuously increasing consumption of canned goods.

The questionnaire included a question as to the value of stock figures and the time at which these should be collected. Of 737 answering these questions, only 51 stated that such figures were valueless, the others believing in their importance. Sixty-four wanted monthly figures, 146 quarterly, 209 semi-annually, and 267 annually. It is assumed that those answering these questions affirmatively are willing to furnish such figures, if requested.

West Coast canners were excluded from the questionnaire mailing list, as their stocks were taken by the California State Division of Markets. All those canners did not report their stocks but an adjustment was made by the Division of Markets to cover the probable stocks in the hands of all the West Coast canners. The following table shows the actual holdings reported and the adjusted figures:

Product	Reported Cases	Adjusted Cases
Apricots	851,847	1,037,699
Pears	113,577	124,851
Peaches	1,279,337	1,563,026

The estimated figures are believed to be nearly correct statements of actual stocks, on hand May 1. June 1 stocks in hands of Pacific cooperative canners were appreciably lower.

This survey has shown the possibilities of collecting such stock figures as may be desired by the industry; 100 per cent figures, to be available within a reasonable time, are out of the question; but sufficiently comprehensive figures are rather quick-

ly obtainable, and will be undertaken gladly by the Department of Commerce if the trade evinces a real interest in the matter and will cooperate.

Alaska Salmon Pack

The Alaska salmon pack up to August 31, according to figures compiled by the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries in cooperation with the Association of Pacific Fisheries, is estimated at 5,582,700 cases, of which 1,459,700 cases were packed in Western Alaska, 1,445,000 in Central Alaska, and 2,678,000 in Southeastern Alaska. The pack by varieties was as follows: Reds, 1,845,000; pinks, 2,627,200; chums, 865,000; kings, 56,000; cohoes, 189,500.

Truck Crop Markets

Supplies of fruits and vegetables continued ample for current needs during the week ended September 1, and some stock which could be stored was being put away for the future market, according to the U. S. Market News Service. Cantaloupes, peaches and pears held fairly well at recent price levels, but sweet potatoes declined and lettuce also tended downward.

Movement of California peaches was averaging around 500 cars daily, but many of these were going to canneries. Washington and Colorado were quite active along with Illinois and Indiana in the Middle West and the Virginias, Maryland and Pennsylvania in the East.

Pear shipments from Washington and Oregon were increasing, while the movement from California gradually diminished.

CARLOT SHIPMENTS

Commodity	Aug. 26 Sept. 1 1928	Aug. 19-25 1928	Aug. 28 Sept. 3 1927	Total this season to Sept. 1	Total last season to Sept. 3	Total last season
Apples, total	1,438	1,015	1,354	7,989	6,386	93,166
Eastern	1,018	768	1,052	4,854	4,825	44,492
Western	420	247	302	3,135	1,561	48,674
Cabbage	395	391	532	19,159	17,446	39,040
Carrots	59	46	(a)	5,396	(a)	6,646
Cauliflower	68	36	64	133	166	9,057
Green peas	88	126	47	4,471	3,811	4,149
Mixed deciduous fruits	606	511	317	4,862	4,025	5,407
Mixed vegetables	535	642	701	25,025	25,775	35,045
Pears	1,891	1,829	1,266	12,739	10,006	18,712
Peppers	34	32	28	2,746	2,011	2,824
Plums and prunes	558	719	427	4,791	3,983	5,983
String beans	7	12	23	5,974	5,468	6,481
Tomatoes	563	424	378	23,099	23,623	32,626

(a) Unavailable

Farm Prices

Farm prices on August 15 showed a drop of 6 points compared with prices received by producers one month previous, ac-

cording to the monthly farm price report of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The general index figure, which stood at 139 on August 15 was, however, 7 points higher than on the corresponding date last year.

California Peach Pack

The pack of peaches in California up to August 25 totaled 9,718,634 cases, according to statistics compiled by the Canners League and the Southern California Canners Association. The pack, by varieties was as follows: Tuscans (final) 2,649,040; New Midsummers, 5,019,665; Phillips, 1,903,625; miscellaneous, 146,304.

Pea Pack in New York

A detailed report on the pea pack in New York in 1928 has been compiled and issued by the Association of New York State Canners, Inc., from which the following summary is taken:

	No. 1 Cases	No. 2 *a* Cases	No. 10 Dozens	Total as No. 2 Cases
Alaska	121,777	360,470	30,835	568,505
Rogers Winner	2,214	52,974	1,903	60,248
Surprise	29,333	349,086	10,284	406,623
Sweet varieties	142,839	862,155	54,269	1,153,236
Total	296,163	1,624,685	*b* 97,291	2,188,612
Total, 1927	184,439	1,167,026	101,539	1,624,687
Total, 1926	232,850	2,057,111	*b* 137,354	2,660,401

a Includes pack in glass and 1/4 kilos.
b Includes No. 5's.

Weather and Crops

Under the influence of abnormally cool weather and rather frequent showers, during the week ended September 4, growing crops matured slowly in the central-northern portion of the country, especially in Minnesota, according to the U. S. Weather Bureau. Further showery, cloudy weather in the Southeast, from Virginia southward and southwestward to the lower Mississippi Valley, was detrimental, in general, to farming interests.

Rains in the Ohio Valley were beneficial in conditioning the soil for fall plowing, although they were insufficient in some sections, particularly in parts of Ohio, in western Kentucky, and central Illinois. The soil continued too dry also in much of the central and northern Plains area and in central and southern Texas, but the drought was broken in western Oklahoma; elsewhere east of the Rocky Mountains the soil is in fairly good condition, except it is too wet where heavy rains fell.

West of the Rockies moisture is quite generally needed in central and northern districts, particularly in the Pacific Northwest where the soil is too dry and hard for plowing. Field work was retarded by rain in the south Atlantic and east Gulf sections, and the Central-Northern States, including the upper Mississippi Valley, but elsewhere fairly good progress was made.

Business Conditions

The dollar volume of business, measured by check payments, was smaller during the week ended September 1 than in the previous week but was 3 per cent greater than in the corresponding period of 1927, according to the weekly statement of the Department of Commerce. Operations in steel plants showed no change from the previous week but were on a much higher level than a year ago. The general wholesale price index averaged slightly higher than in the preceding week, being above the level of last year also.

Interest rates on time money showed no changes from the previous week, while call money rates again averaged higher. Rates on both time and call funds were considerably higher than at this time a year ago. Business failures were larger in number than in either the preceding week or the corresponding week last year.

CAR LOADINGS

Period	Total	Miscellaneous	Merchandise L.C.L.	Other
Week ended August 25	1,080,840	424,627	257,243	398,970
Preceding week	1,056,905	408,285	255,832	386,788
Corresponding week, 1927	1,109,341	416,798	262,644	429,899
Corresponding week, 1926	1,128,563	413,624	263,950	450,989

Decision on Oklahoma—Missouri Rates

The Interstate Commerce Commission has issued an order providing that until December 10, 1928, the Missouri Kansas Texas Railroad Company is authorized to establish a rate of 37 cents per 100 pounds for the transportation of canned goods in carloads from Vinita, Okla., to stations on the Missouri Kansas Texas Railroad, Franklin, Mo., to St. Louis, Mo., inclusive, applicable over its own rails from and to said stations, and to maintain higher rates from, to and between intermediate points, provided that the present rates from, to and between the said higher-rated intermediate points shall not be increased except as may hereafter be authorized by the Commission and shall in no case exceed the lowest combination of rates subject to the Interstate Commerce Act.

Adequate Research Appropriations Recommended

Adequate Federal appropriations for economic and scientific agricultural research by the U. S. Department of Agriculture are recommended in the report of the Special Committee on Agricultural Policy of the United States Chamber of Commerce, which has been sent out to the 1,500 member organizations of the chamber for a referendum vote. The Committee's report embraces seven separate recommendations, the vote on which is to be completed by October 15.

Foreign Trade Notes

The following items on the foreign canning industry and trade are from the weekly bulletin of the Foodstuffs Division of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce:

Italian cherries in brine.—A report from the Consul General at Genoa, Italy, states that the Ligurian cherry crop there for 1928 has been ruined by weather conditions and insect pests. It is believed that sufficient stocks of the 1926 and 1927 packs are on hand to supply the 1928 market, however. Some Italian exporters claim that the high cost of production, coupled with the high tariff, prohibit Italian-packed cherries competing in the United States markets.

Portuguese fishing industry for 1926 and 1927.—Exports of Portuguese sardines for 1927 amounted to 6,539,330 kilos, approximately 14,420,000 pounds, according to a report from the American Consul at Oporto, Portugal. The complete report covers the Portuguese fishing industry for the past two years, and gives considerable information regarding the values of the different kinds of fish caught, statistics of exports of sardines and other fish, and some general information regarding the industry. This report can be obtained by interested American firms upon request of any offices of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce.

Italian fish industry.—A comprehensive report on the Italian fishing industry and trade in fish has been completed and forwarded to the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce by the American Consul at Naples, Italy. The text of this report is not given, but it is stated that the complete report will be available to any interested American firms upon request of any offices of the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce.

Philippine canned salmon trade.—The Assistant American Trade Commissioner at Manila, in a recent report states that

canned salmon is rapidly being replaced in the Philippine markets by canned mackerel, largely because of the differential in price of two pesos per case. Imports of canned salmon during the first six months of this year were only 16,000 cases compared with 63,000 cases during the corresponding period of 1927. On the other hand, mackerel imports which have been negligible in the past amounted to 30,000 cases during the first six months of this year.

Pilchard industry of Vancouver, Canada.—Total production of 23 plants engaged in manufacturing pilchard meal and oil in Vancouver, amounted to 583,000 gallons of oil and 2,916 tons of meal on August first of this year, according to a report from the Assistant Trade Commissioner at Vancouver. This is an increase of 91 per cent of oil, and 86 per cent of meal over the corresponding period of last year.

Bids Sought on Apple Sauce and Pumpkin

The Navy Department is asking for bids, to be opened October 16, on canned apple sauce, 92,000 pounds for delivery at Boston, 75,000 pounds at Brooklyn, 68,000 pounds at Philadelphia, 182,000 pounds at Hampton Roads, 194,000 pounds at Mare Island, and 200,000 pounds at Bremerton.

The Department is also asking for bids, to be opened October 23, on canned pumpkin, 34,000 pounds for delivery at Boston, 28,000 pounds at Brooklyn, 12,000 pounds at Philadelphia, 63,000 pounds at Hampton Roads, 85,000 pounds at Mare Island, and 51,000 pounds at Bremerton.

Copies of the schedule (9660 for apple sauce and 9655 for pumpkin) on which to submit bids may be obtained from the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

Fruit Juice Powder Industry Planned in Porto Rico

Arrangements have been completed for the installation of a plant in Porto Rico for the conversion of fruit juices to a powdered form, according to the Assistant Trade Commissioner at San Juan. Surplus juice resulting from the canning of grapefruit and pineapples will be used as a raw products, it is declared. The final product will appear in a powdered form and is intended for use in bakery products and other places where liquid flavoring materials cannot be successfully used. If the operation is successful extensions are planned, it is said.